

2021 SAMHSA SOAR August e-News

Where Can YOU Contribute? SOAR for Children Process Intercepts

The SOAR for Children Process Intercepts infographic is a great tool for new and existing stakeholders to identify where they can become involved or assist in the SOAR process. Each intercept identifies key actions that can be taken by stakeholders from teachers and caregivers to community behavioral health providers. Potential actions include identifying children and youth who may be eligible, gathering educational evidence, or dedicating funds to SOAR practitioner positions. SOAR Leaders can use this tool when marketing SOAR for Children to new audiences or identifying areas to engage new stakeholders.



[View the SOAR for Children Intercepts Infographic](#)

Build Your SOAR Toolbox: SSI/SSDI Post-Entitlement Events Guide

The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center has developed a guide that presents common post-entitlement events that occur for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries. This guide walks SOAR-trained case workers through common events such as retroactive payments, overpayments, suspensions, reinstatements, and more. Using this guide, SOAR practitioners can assist SSI/SSDI beneficiaries with navigating these events to maintain eligibility.

[Access the Full Guide](#)



Recognizing Same-Sex Couples Receiving Social Security Benefits

Did you know that the Social Security Administration (SSA) recognizes same-sex couples in marital and some non-marital legal relationships (such as some civil unions and domestic partnerships) in all states for the purposes of determining entitlement to Social Security benefits, Medicare entitlement, and eligibility and payment amounts for SSI?

That's right! The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) holds that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry in all states. Further, SSA benefits are benefits that same-sex couples can and should access as well!

Social Security taxes pay for three kinds of benefits: retirement, disability, and survivors. For those entitled to benefits, their spouses and eligible family members might receive benefits, too.

Here are three important facts related to SSA's benefits for same-sex couples:

- Marital status is considered when SSA determines eligibility and payment amounts for SSI. Same-sex couples can receive Social Security benefits when a spouse with qualifying work credits retires, becomes disabled, or dies.
- SSA also recognizes same-sex marriages and some non-marital legal relationships established in foreign jurisdictions for the purposes of determining entitlement to Social Security benefits and Medicare. Be mindful that for some surviving spouses, divorced spouses, and adults disabled during childhood, benefits could end if they marry.
- Children or stepchildren could also be entitled to benefits based on their relationship to the person with qualifying work credits.

SSA encourages all married couples and couples committed to a non-marital legal relationship to apply for benefits even if eligibility is uncertain, to protect against the loss of any potential benefits. In addition, it is important to immediately inform SSA of significant life changes such as a move, marriage, separation, divorce, or becoming the parent of a child.

For more information, please see the [SSA website](#) for more information. You can also read SSA's publication [What Same-Sex Couples Need to Know](#).



SOAR Jobs

Texas

IntegralCare is seeking a part-time SOAR Specialist based in Austin, Texas. The successful candidate will complete SOAR applications and provide specialized training, advocacy, and assistance to consumers who may be eligible and wish to apply for SSI/SSDI benefits.

Virginia

Northern Virginia Family Service is seeking a full-time benefits counselor and SOAR advocate based in Oakton, Virginia. The successful candidate will work with the Community Housing team to help clients as they navigate public entitlement services and benefits counseling as part of a case management team.

Ohio

The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) is seeking a SOAR Ohio Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator based in Columbus, Ohio. This position will assist agencies and staff who are working with anyone experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and/or preparing to exit institutions and living with mental illness and/or physical, developmental, and intellectual disabilities to successfully apply for SSI/SSDI using the SOAR model.

Learn more about these positions on the [SOARWorks website](#). Do you have a job posting you would like to share with the SOAR community? Please submit it to the [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center](#)!

Sharing Our Successes

Maryland Recognizes SOAR Super Stars!

Maryland has long had a SOAR certification process for those who have had at least four out of five SOAR cases approved. This year, knowing



how much work goes into each SOAR application, the Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) introduced a SOAR recognition process to acknowledge individuals for their efforts to achieve SOAR success. To qualify, a SOAR-trained case worker must have had at least one case approved this fiscal year. In addition, all previous approvals were counted for a cumulative total. Recognition certificates were awarded at the following intervals: 1st approval, 10th approval, 25th, approval, 50th approval, 75th approval, and so on.

Additionally, as part of the event, a number of *Maryland SOAR Value in Action Awards* were presented. These community-nominated awards recognized individuals and partners who truly embody SOAR values such as respect, choice, empathy, partnership, and compassion. Through their actions, the awardees demonstrated their belief in the strengths, courage, and potential of individuals and maintained a passion and commitment to their work even when experiencing difficulties or challenges.

[See Who Received Recognition for Their SOAR Success](#)

[Submit Your SOAR Success](#)

**Sharing Our Successes stories are edited for brevity and clarity. All client names have been changed to protect anonymity.*

Events

[SOAR Webinar: The Medical Summary Report - A Deep Dive for SOAR Providers](#)

TODAY, August 3, 2021, 3:00-4:00 p.m. ET

This webinar will take a deep dive into writing effective and culturally aware Medical Summary Reports (MSRs). A SOAR provider and SOAR beneficiary will share their experience throughout the MSR interviewing and writing process.

[Register for Today's Webinar](#)

Events

[SOARing Over Lunch Conference Calls](#)

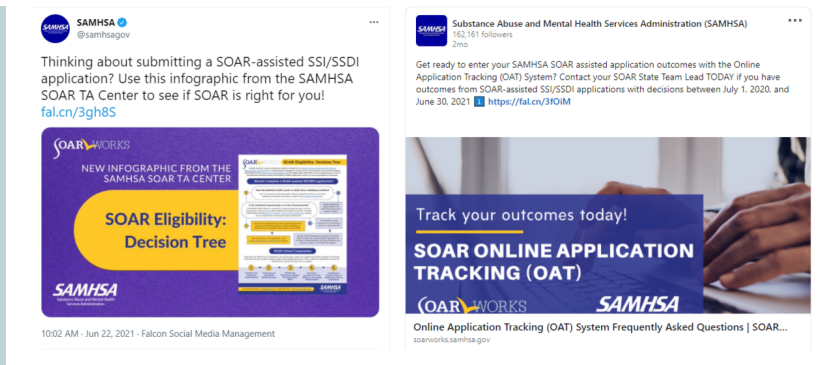
August 17, 2021, 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET

The next SOARing Over Lunch Conference Call will take place on August 17, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. ET! The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center hosts this series of informal monthly calls designed to help support SOAR efforts across the country. Participants can join to ask about any SOAR-related question they may have.

[Add SOARing Over Lunch to Your Calendar](#)

Get Social with the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center

Hear more about what SAMHSA SOAR is up to via [@samhsagov](#) on Twitter, [@samhsa](#) on Facebook, and [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) on LinkedIn!



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (TA) Center is sponsored by SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Disclaimer: The SAMHSA SOAR Technical Assistance Center is sending this eNews with support from SAMHSA, HHS. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of HHS or SAMHSA.

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